

(Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BLACK AIDS AWARENESS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, today is Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a day when we urge African Americans to get educated, get involved and get tested. On Monday, the House passed my resolution H. Con. Res. 35, recognizing the goals and the ideals of Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

The global HIV/AIDS pandemic is simply devastating black America, Africa and the Caribbean in disproportionate numbers to the rest of the world. With 40 million people infected around the world, over 1 million of which are right here in the United States, this disease is as much a problem in South Africa as it is in my district in Alameda County.

In the United States, among young people, among women, and among men, African Americans are at the most risk of getting infected with HIV, of developing AIDS and of dying of this disease. The unfortunate reality is that to be black in America is to be at greater risk of HIV and AIDS.

The numbers are staggering, but let me just mention a few specifically. According to CDC, in 2005, African American women accounted for 66 percent of all new HIV/AIDS cases among women. Compared to white women, African American women were 25 times more likely to be infected. Today, AIDS is the number one, number one cause of death among African American women between the ages of 25 and 34. That is, quite frankly, just mind boggling.

Black gay men are also heavily affected by this disease. In 2005, CDC surveyed black gay men in five United States cities and found that 46 percent, 46 percent were HIV positive. The situation is just as stark in my own district. In Alameda County, over 6,600 cases of AIDS have been diagnosed since 1980, and nearly 4,000 people have died. Of those numbers, African Americans represent well over 40 percent of the cumulative AIDS cases and AIDS deaths in the county.

In 1998, we became the first county in the nation to declare a state of emergency in the African American community. We tapped into the emergency funds and started a community-wide task force that included local AIDS service organizations, elected officials and county health departments. Together, this task force sought to provide a focused and very targeted response to the AIDS epidemic within the African American community in Alameda County.

At the same time, here in Congress, with the leadership of my colleague, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, who

was then chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, and Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and, of course, with President Clinton signing this, we created the Minority AIDS Initiative in 1998. I have to thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership in helping us break the silence here on Capitol Hill with regard to the devastating cases and the situation of African Americans in America as it relates to HIV and AIDS, and recognizing the inability of our traditional programs to serve the minority communities.

The Minority AIDS Initiative was specifically designed to build capacity and to expand HIV/AIDS outreach activities so that we can target programs and services, target them directly to those who need them. It took us 8 years, but I am happy to say that, last year, we finally codified the Minority AIDS Initiative by passing the Ryan White Treatment Modernization Act at the end of the Congress last year, which included the Minority AIDS Initiative.

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But now, of course, what do we have to do? We have got to fully fund it. We need a minimum of \$61 million, and that is just a drop in the bucket. We need billions of dollars to address this pandemic. And at the same time we have got to go further. We have got to get to the real factors that are ultimately driving the epidemic in the African American community: poverty and discrimination, the lack of affordable housing, the disproportionate rates of incarceration among black men, poor access to care, and limited cultural competency for health service providers.

All of these deserve our attention and deserve action. We can start to get at one of these factors by ending really what this is, is a head-in-the-sand approach to HIV prevention that is turning our prisons, really turning our prisons into a breeding ground for this disease.

We need to provide routine, but rigorous opt-out HIV testing that is linked with treatment for all incarcerated persons. Congresswoman WATERS, I am sure she will talk about her bill in her presentation. But this is, again, a major step in the right direction. We have got to pass Congresswoman WATERS' bill, my bill, H.R. 178, which is called the Justice Act. This would allow condoms in our prisons and demand accountability in stopping the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among incarcerated persons.

We have got to do this. This is a crisis. And we have to do this part, our part, in Congress to make sure that this happens. We must continue to work with advocates and health providers and faith communities to raise awareness, to get tested and to get active in our communities.

We participated last year with the International Aids Conference in To-

ronto, and there were wonderful, unbelievable activists at that conference from America, African Americans, who came to Toronto to raise the plight of the African American AIDS pandemic to the international level.

Many were amazed that here in America we have a pandemic that is just killing many of our communities. At that conference many of our civil rights organizations recommitted themselves to making the stamping out of HIV and AIDS a top priority in terms of their overall objectives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TIAHRT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LIFT THE RESTRICTION ON MEMBER TRAVEL ON PERSONAL AIRCRAFT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the group today. I represent the southern district of New Mexico, New Mexico 2. I come with a chart today, and with a map of the district.

Now, if you can visualize, I live all the way on the east side of the State, Hobbs, New Mexico. We are about 3 miles from the Texas border and represent all of the way to Arizona. Now, it is almost a 9- to 9½-hour drive to come across to the Silver City area, and then if we have to go further north up into the Zuni area, it takes an additional 2 to 3 hours.

So each time I go home is a lot of miles. On a 3-day weekend, we have made up to 1,000 miles. On the 10-day breaks, we have been known to make up to 2,500 miles with events all of the way across. And then on our first 30-day break, our August break in my first year here, we had 29 different motel rooms and about 6,500 miles that we made to cover this large district.

Now, my particular approach today is to talk about a rule that the new majority put into place when we voted on January 4, 2007. I will read from those rules, House Resolution 6, section 207, rule 23, item 15(a). A Member, Delegate or Resident Commissioner may not use personal funds, official funds or campaign funds for a flight on a nongovernment airplane that is not licensed by the FAA to operate for commission or hire.

Now, in the FAA there are basically two categories of operating for hire. There is the category of airlines. Those operate under section 121 of the FAA rules. The second section that is predominately used is section 135; that is, the charters. Those are the private aircraft that are used that you call, and

they are like a taxi. They show up so they are called air taxis or air charters.

Now, these are the only two categories who live in the West, in these broad, sprawling districts. We all represent about 6- to 800,000 people. That is determined by our districting process. So everybody represents the same number of people, but it requires a lot more ground for me to represent 600,000 people, so I have a small aircraft, a four-place aircraft, single engine, that I use to fly around the district.

Now, when it takes me 9 hours to drive across this district, I can make it in about 2½ in that small aircraft. That is about the size of a Volkswagen. If I get in, the ceiling is just barely above my head. My knees are touching. And if people get in the rear seats, their knees are absolutely up against us. So this is not like some limousine service.

This is just basically a small aircraft with a 210 horsepower engine, very economical. I would use the same gallons of gas to fly across the district as I would to drive across it. But according to the rules that are adopted by the new majority, we cannot any longer use this. I cannot even pay for this out of my own pocket to serve the constituents of New Mexico. It is against the rules. I will be held in violation of House rules. And why they did it, I do not know. It affects as many people in their party as it does ours.

Now, given that backdrop, it is very interesting to see that the Speaker of the House now wants a 42-place aircraft to transport her. She was given the access to a Lear jet-type aircraft that the former Speaker used, 12 seats, 5 crew members, and those are very comfortable, plush seats. But now then she is wanting a 42-person aircraft with a crew of 16.

The cost of flying that aircraft is \$22,000 per hour. The cost for her to round-trip back and forth to California is going to be an astounding \$420,000. Now, we just voted for an omnibus where we took funds away from our military, and yet she is asking the military to not only take funds away from the troops, but also to fund this \$420,000 trip, presumably every weekend, because all of us try to go home every weekend.

At the same time she has taken a constitutional provision for me to use my private property, to use my own funds, my own aircraft, and I cannot do that because she has made it against the rules.

Now, we were told when the Democratic majority took over that there was going to be a new way of doing business, and we are finding out what that way of doing business is today. We are finding the willingness to limit people from using personal assets, while on the other hand reaching for these extraordinarily large perks.

Madam Speaker, I would request unanimous consent to submit for the RECORD the actual words of the rule.

Also I would like to submit for the RECORD the Washington Post article which brings out the observations about this new Speaker requesting these. It is dated February 6, 2007. And then I would like to submit for the RECORD the Lou Dobbs comments last night that she could take a circus with her. So we will submit those.

H. RES. 6 RULES RESTRICTIONS ON MEMBERS TRAVEL

SEC. 207. FURTHER LIMITATION ON THE USE OF FUNDS FOR TRAVEL.

Rule XXIII is further amended by redesignating clause 15 (as earlier redesignated) as clause 16, and by inserting after clause 14 the following new clause:

15. (a) A Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner may not use personal funds, official funds, or campaign funds for a flight on a nongovernmental airplane that is not licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration to operate for compensation or hire.

“(b) In this clause, the term ‘campaign funds’ includes funds of any political committee under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, without regard to whether the committee is an authorized committee of the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner involved under such Act.”

[From CNN, Feb. 5, 2007]

42 BUSINESS CLASS SEATS, A FULLY-ENCLOSED STATE ROOM, AN ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

CORRESPONDENT: “It’s clear skies for Nancy Pelosi. The Pentagon is providing the House speaker with an Air Force plane large enough to accommodate her staff, family, supporters and members of the Californian delegation when she travels around the country. . . .

“Pelosi wants routine access to a larger plane. It includes 42 business class seats, a fully-enclosed state room, an entertainment center, a private bed, state-of-the-art communications system and a crew of 16. . . .

“It would be 42 people, and clearly she won’t be the only one on this plane. She wants to have members of the congressional delegation. And her critics will say, look, this is a very nice perk that she can share with her colleagues and use as leverage, should she need to.”

LOU DOBBS: “Well, it’s really a fascinating thing: 42. She could take a circus with her, for crying out loud.”

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 6, 2007]
PELOSI CATCHES NONSTOP FLIGHTS HOME

Amid rumblings from conservatives that she is seeking special treatment, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D) will receive use of an Air Force jet larger than the one used by her predecessor, Rep. J. Dennis Hastert, so she can fly nonstop to her home in San Francisco.

Ever since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the speaker, who is next in line for the presidency after the vice president, has been given use of a government plane for security reasons. Hastert (R-Ill.), who had flown commercially before the attacks, was the first to have use of a plane. But the one he traveled in was too small to make it to California without refueling.

Yesterday, the House sergeant-at-arms issued a statement saying that the leadership is awaiting word from the Air Force on the rules for using the plane. It is unclear, for example, who can travel with Pelosi and whether she can return home from a political event on taxpayer-funded plane.

Pelosi’s office requested the guidelines, triggering a story in the Washington Times in which sources questioned whether she was

asking for more than the former speaker received.

Democratic aides sputtered about a “right-wing hatchet job” to make Pelosi look bad. But, said one involved in the negotiations, “this is about security, not about convenience.”

An aide in Hastert’s office said yesterday that the former speaker used the plane for official business but not for political travel. He did at times transport his wife and staff when he was flying to and from Illinois.

Brendan Daley, a spokesman for Pelosi, said that she will not use the plane for political travel.

[Feb. 5, 2007]

SOURCE: STANDARD PLANE NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR . . . SUPPORTERS AND OTHER MEMBERS

“The Department of Defense offered Speaker Pelosi the same aircraft” as the one used by Hastert, said one senior Republican who has spoken extensively with Defense Department officials about Pelosi’s requests. “She found it was not big enough for staff, supporters and other Members.”

[From the Examiner, Feb. 5, 2007]

COLUMNIST: SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI NOW WANTS TO BE CUT IN ON THE TAKE

“Well, that didn’t take long. After campaigning against the ‘waste, fraud, and abuse’ of the Bush administration, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi now wants to be cut in on the take.

“The woman who five months ago said, ‘Democrats are committed to a new direction in the way our government does business so taxpayers’ money is handled responsibly,’ is dunning the White House to put an Air Force jet at her disposal—reportedly, not only for her use, but for her family’s as well. . . .

“But all of this luxury doesn’t come cheap. Hourly operating costs for an Air Force C-32—the planes that typically carry the vice president, the first lady, and Cabinet officials—are about \$15,000 an hour.

“So for one of those planes to fly the speaker home to San Francisco, drop her off, and fly back and get her, would cost taxpayers around \$300,000—while round-trip commercial fares start at \$233. That doesn’t qualify as “waste and abuse”?

[From the Washington Times, Feb. 5, 2007]

SOURCE: PELOSI AIDES PRESSING THE POINT OF HER SUCCESSION

“The sources, who include those in Congress and in the administration, said the Democrat is seeking regular military flights not only for herself and her staff, but also for relatives and for other members of the California delegation. A knowledgeable source called the request ‘carte blanche for an aircraft any time.’

“‘They [Pelosi aides] are pressing the point of her succession and that the [Department of Defense] needs to play ball with the speaker’s needs,’ one source said. . . .

“U.S. Air Force travel for VIPs such as members of Congress is first-rate. The planes are staffed with stewards who serve meals and tend an open bar.”

[From Fox News Channel, Feb. 5, 2007]

PELOSI SEEKS MILITARY PLANE FOR MERE “152-MILE TRIP” TO DEMOCRAT RETREAT

“Pelosi’s office also inquired about a military plane for the 152-mile trip to a Democratic party congressional conference in Williamsburg, Virginia last week. No plane was provided.”

MINORITY AIDS INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, the first annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day was organized on February 23, 2001, with the message: Get educated, get involved, get tested. The National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day dates back to 1999 when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention funded five national nonprofit organizations known then as the Community Capacity-Building Coalition, which are Concerned Black Men, Incorporated, of Philadelphia; Health Watch Information and Promotion Services, Jackson State University; Mississippi Urban Research Center; National Black Alcoholism and Addictions Council; and National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS.

On February 23, 2001, the CCBC organized the first annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The date was changed to February 7, the following year, that was in 2002, and now it is recognized on February 7 of each year.

Madam Speaker and Members, many members of the Congressional Black Caucus and many Members of Congress have joined in the struggle and the fight to find a cure to prevent HIV and AIDS. I need to congratulate all of these Members right in the CBC. I need to congratulate BARBARA LEE, and ED TOWNS, and DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. CUMMINGS, and ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, and DIANE WATSON, and so many more for the years of work that they have put in on dealing with HIV and AIDS, and HIV and AIDS in the minority community.

That is why back in 1998 I worked to establish the Minority Aids Initiative with the support of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Clinton administration. The Minority Aids Initiative provides grants for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs that serve minority communities and enables health care providers and community-based organizations to expand their capacity to serve these communities.

The initiative received an initial appropriation of \$166 million in fiscal year 1999, and was funded at slightly less than \$400 million in the most recent spending cycle.

However, the AIDS virus has continued to spread in the minority communities, and more needs to be done. This year I am calling for at least \$610 million in funding to expand the Minority Aids Initiative, and redouble our efforts to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic which has been especially devastating to African Americans and other communities of color.

But it is important to remember that HIV/AIDS affects us all. Over 1 million

Americans are living with HIV/AIDS, and 24 to 27 percent of them do not know they are infected. That is why on Monday I introduced H.R. 822, the Routine HIV/AIDS Screening Coverage Act, a bill to require health insurance plans to cover routine HIV/AIDS tests under the same terms and conditions as other routine health screening.

Routine HIV/AIDS screening will allow thousands of African Americans and other infected individuals to find out about their infection, begin life-extending treatment and avoid spreading the virus to others. I also very soon will reintroduce the Stop AIDS in Prison Act, a bill to require routine HIV/AIDS screening of all Federal prison inmates upon entry, and prior to release from prison. The bill would also require HIV awareness education for all inmates and comprehensive treatment for those inmates who test positive.

Madam Speaker and Members, we here today come on the floor of Congress, all of us, to speak about this because it is a pandemic. It is a pandemic in the world that must be dealt with. We must lead the way here in the United States of America.

And for those of us whose communities are being overtaken by HIV and AIDS, we must stand up and be counted. We must ask for the money. We must demand the resources. We must take our heads out of the sand. We must call on all of the members of our community to accept personal responsibility. We must get our churches involved, all of our social clubs and organizations. Today we make a special appeal to them.

ON THE PASSING OF LEO T. MCCARTHY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, this week the State of California and indeed the Nation has lost a great leader. Leo McCarthy was a statesman, he was a great champion for justice, and he was a dear friend and purposeful mentor to me. As speaker of the California State House and Lieutenant Governor, Leo McCarthy promoted a values-based agenda to educate our children, grow our economy and protect our environment.

After he left office as the head of the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at the University of San Francisco, Mr. MCCARTHY taught children and students about promoting justice according to the highest ethical standard. He was brilliant, he was principled and committed to the future.

I am proud to have called Leo a friend for more than 30 years. He encouraged me not only to support can-

didates and be involved in the political process, but he was the main force in encouraging me to run for office in the first place in my own right.

Again, he was my friend and mentor, but he was that to so many people in California. Many who serve in this Congress today were mentored by Leo McCarthy, going back many years.

As recently as Saturday night when I spoke to Leo, he was optimistic about the future. He said, "My morale is high. I am surrounded by my children and my grandchildren," and of course his wife, whom he adored, Jackie. "They are with me, and I am not getting better as quickly as I would like, but I am happy."

My husband, Paul, and I and indeed our entire family, extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to many who loved Leo, especially his wife, Jackie, who he adored, and his children, Sharon, Conna, Adam and Niall.

I also want to recognize our former mayor of San Francisco, Art Agnos, who was a dear friend of Leo and a great comfort to him in his last months. I know Congresswoman ESHOO and I were regular visitors to Leo McCarthy's bed side, and he followed the proceedings of Congress with great interest right up until the last day.

I hope it is a comfort to his family, as I said, whom he adored, that so many people are praying for them at this sad time and that are mourning his loss.

I just wanted to make our colleagues aware of the loss of Leo McCarthy, a great person, a great friend, a great American. He served our country in the military, he served our country in the legislature. He served our country by teaching our young people. He will be sorely missed.

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IRAQ STUDY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I would also like to second what the Speaker said with regard to Leo McCarthy. He was also a member of the National Commission on Gambling, which I was the author of. And he came by my office a number of times. And I was actually going to put his bio in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. So I thank the Speaker for that comment, and second it.

Madam Speaker, I was the author of the amendment to set up the Iraq Study Group. I felt that more should be done to look at what we were doing in Iraq, and so we put together a group and picked 10 people. It was chaired by former Secretary of State Jim Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton, head of the 9/11 Commission. Also